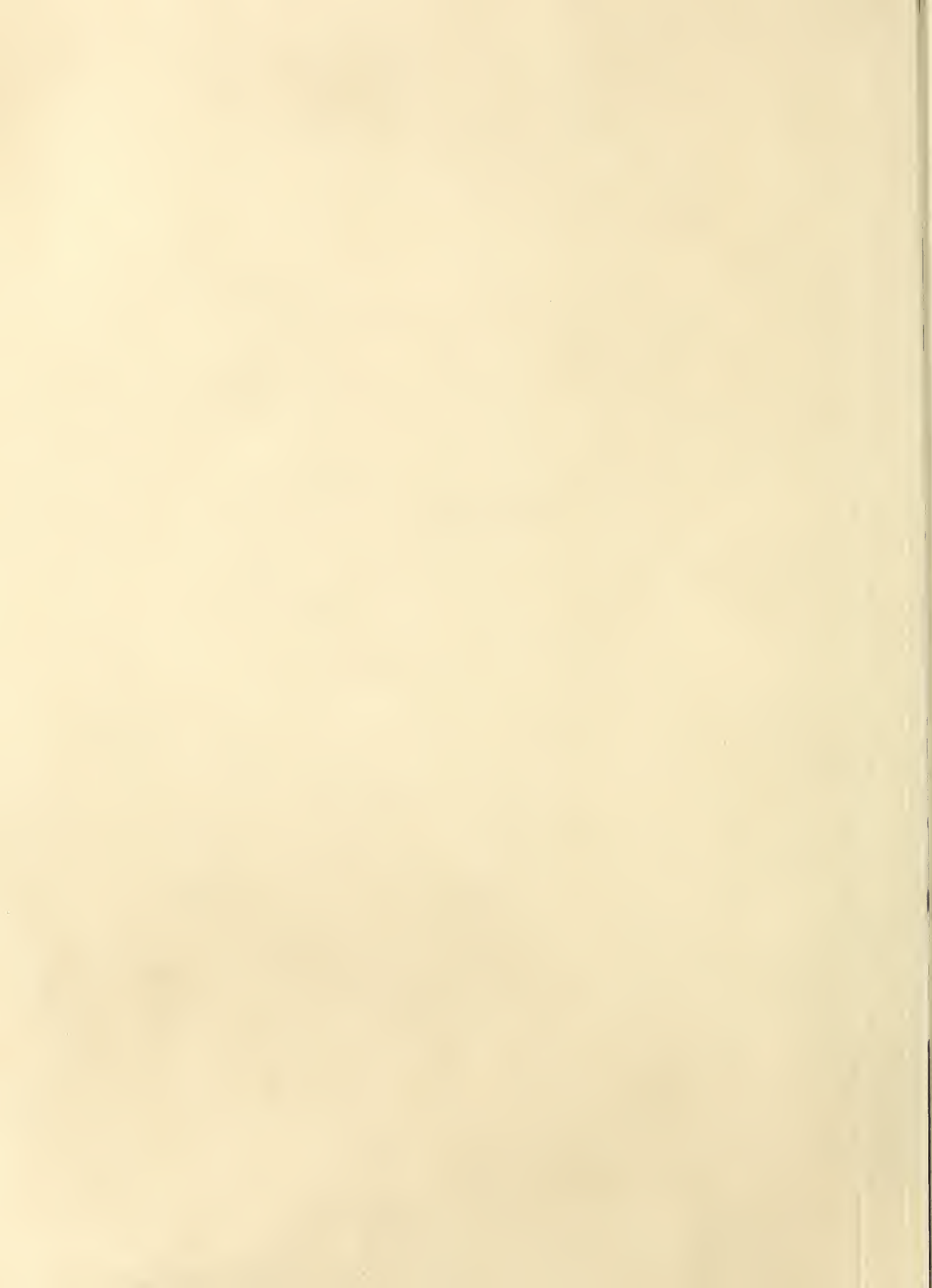


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CURRENT SERIAL RECORDS

how to use the
AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION PROGRAM

PA 454 U. S. Department of Agriculture
Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service

Revised August 1965



Conservation problems exist on nearly two-thirds of the Nation's cropland, almost three-quarters of the grazing land, and over half of the farm forest or wooded land.

Almost every farm and ranch needs some form of agricultural conservation.

Such conservation work on private land can be done only by the owners and operators who use the land. However, the land treatment measures often cost more than a prudent farmer or rancher can afford to invest from his own resources, considering the many expenses he bears in relation to his income.

CONSERVATION AND THE ACP

Conservation farming is more than "just good farming." It includes protection and benefits for the public, as well as for the farmer, in both the short-run and long-range future.

The Agricultural Conservation Program is an arrangement by which the public joins with farmers and ranchers to share the cost of needed conservation measures that protect, improve and renew soil, water, woodland and wildlife resources on private land.

Over two million different farmers and ranchers use ACP regularly to help solve their conservation problems. Effective use of the ACP helps insure that needed conservation work will be done adequately and in time.

ACP IN YOUR COUNTY

The ACP in your county is run by your Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation (ASC) County Committee. This committee is composed of three local farmers or ranchers and the County Extension Agent. ASC community committeemen, also farmers, assist their neighbors and the county committee.

ACP funds are limited. Decisions as to the best use of available funds are made by your county committee. This committee has been elected by you and your neighbors to make fair and just decisions. Requests for cost-sharing are considered on their merits.

FACTS ABOUT THE ACP



PRACTICES SELECTED FOR LOCAL PROGRAM

ACP is designed to help farmers and ranchers establish a system of conservation use and management of their land resources. Practices are included to promote soil, water, woodland and wildlife conservation measures to meet local conservation problems.

Provision is made to include practices of special or local importance, and to introduce and encourage the use of new and good conservation practices.

ARE THERE LIMITATIONS?

There is no limit on the number of needed conservation practices for which you may receive approval under ACP in a program year. However, your county committee may restrict cost-share approvals to insure maximum conservation with available ACP funds.

You will not be allowed more assistance than the maximum cost-share limitation provided by law or set by your ASC State or County Committee.

Also, if the county committee decides there are more urgent conservation problems than yours that require the available ACP funds, the practice you request may not be approved for cost-sharing at that time.

ACP AND OTHER PROGRAMS

Taking part in ACP has no effect upon your eligibility to participate in other agricultural programs. Neither do you have to participate in other programs to be eligible for ACP.

ACP can help you install eligible practices needed to carry out your conservation plan developed cooperatively through help from your soil and water conservation district. You may also get conservation cost-share assistance on needed land treatment measures in flood prevention, small watershed, rural community development, rural renewal, and resource conservation and development projects.

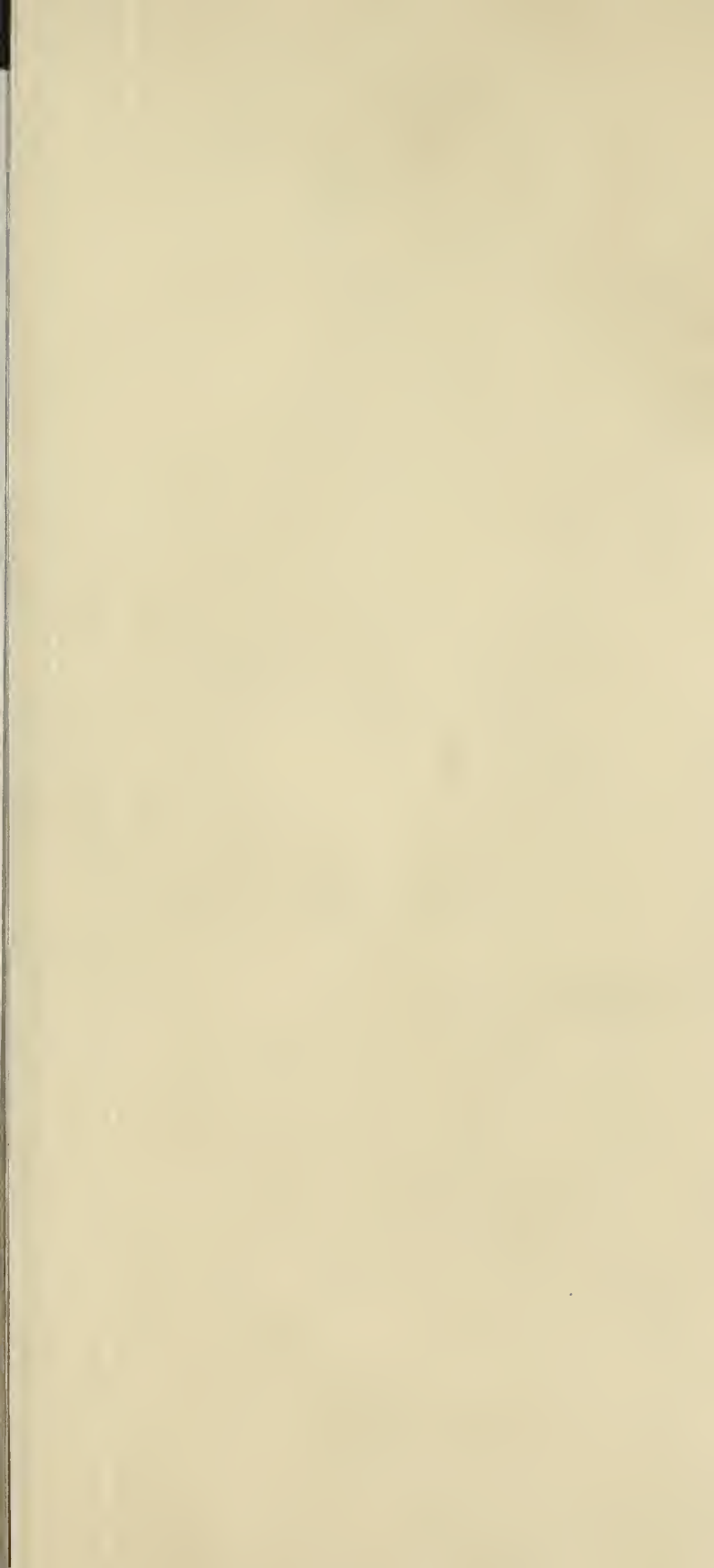
ACP can help you with conservation treatment of land diverted from crop production through individual commodity adjustment programs. ACP can also help you carry out eligible practices essential to other locally sponsored programs.

GROUP ACTION ON MUTUAL PROBLEM

By cooperative action through use of a "pooling agreement," two or more farmers or ranchers in a local community may be given special help in solving a conservation problem affecting their several farms or ranches. You can get details about pooling agreements at the ASCS County Office.

CONSERVATION TO AID WILDLIFE

Many counties offer ACP cost-sharing for special wildlife conservation practices. These include constructing ponds for game birds and fish, restoring or developing marshlands, converting croplands into wetlands, establishing food and cover plots, and establishing protective borders. Many other practices that conserve soil, water and woodland also provide wildlife benefits.



STEPS IN USING THE ACP

HOW TO REQUEST ACP ASSISTANCE

Your request for ACP cost-sharing is taken on an official form which must be signed and filed with the ASCS County Office before work begins on the practice. Sign-up methods vary. For example:

- You may file at your ASCS County Office.
- You may file at a community sign-up meeting.
- Community committeemen may visit you.



WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR REQUEST?

When your request is approved by the ASC County Committee, you will be notified officially of the extent and amount of cost-sharing approved.

If your request is not approved for cost-sharing, your county committee will notify you of the disapproval and the reason for it.

TWO WAYS TO GET ACP COST-SHARING

There are two methods of receiving cost-sharing.

1. **“Cash” plan used in all counties.** You pay the total cost of establishing the approved practice and later you are reimbursed for the Government’s share of the cost.

2. **“Purchase order” plan used in many counties.** At the time you file your request for cost-sharing, you may request a purchase order which you will use to obtain the material or service you will need to install the approved practice.

You use the purchase order to buy a conservation material, such as seed, trees, fertilizer, lime and tile, or a service, such as earth moving, tree planting, tile laying, etc., from an approved vendor.

After the material or service has been furnished to you for the approved practice, the vendor who furnished it will bill the Government and receive payment of the Government’s share of the cost. You must pay the vendor the difference between the amount the Government pays the vendor and the total cost of the material or service used.

TECHNICAL SERVICES FURNISHED

ACP also arranges for the required technical services needed in establishing approved ACP practices. Such technical services are made available by special arrangement with the Soil Conservation Service, U. S. Forest Service, State Forester, County Extension Agent, or others.

For a practice that requires technical aid, the agency responsible for that kind of help makes “need and practicability” determinations before final cost-share approval is issued.

Responsibility for providing needed technical services rests with the agency concerned. However, a call or visit from you will help the technician arrange for prompt service.

To be assured of cost-sharing, do not start the practice until you get a definite notice of approval from the ASCS County Office.

FOLLOW SPECIFICATIONS!

You follow practice specifications to receive cost-sharing. Specifications give the minimum requirements which research and experience indicate are necessary for success of the practice. They are also the minimum standards under which the public is willing to share the cost.

For a practice requiring technical assistance, a technician generally will inspect the practice and certify whether it has been completed according to specifications.

REPORT COMPLETION!

To assure the public that you have done the work for which the public shares the cost, you certify that the practice is completed. No cost-sharing payment can legally be made until you have certified that you have completed the practice. You do this by completing and returning your notice-of-approval form to your ASCS County Office.

If you are unable to complete the practice before the expiration date specified on the form, you may request an extension of time from your county office to complete the practice. Extensions usually can be granted.

IS THERE A PENALTY FOR NOT COMPLETING?

No penalty will be imposed if you are unable to carry out a practice for which cost-sharing has been approved. However, cost-share will be paid by the Government only for a practice that is performed.

If you have received materials or services (CMS) for a practice you are unable to complete, arrange with the county office for settlement of the charge or for approval of a substitute conservation use for it.

MOVING AHEAD THROUGH ACP

Your conservation efforts today will help protect your land for continuous use into the distant future. When you have set a conservation goal, ACP can help bring it within your reach. Don't ask for help on the practice easiest to do. Use the practices most needed on your farm or ranch.



YOUR ACP CHECK-OFF LIST



DETERMINE YOUR NEED

Determine your need on the basis of your long-range conservation program. Specifically, decide what is necessary to overcome your problems.



SELECT A PRACTICE

Study the county ACP and select the practice that will help you meet your needs.



FILE YOUR REQUEST

Visit the ASCS County Office. File a signed request for a particular practice. Specify the extent of your need. Your request must be filed before work begins on your practice.



FURNISH INFORMATION TO TECHNICAL AGENCIES

If the practice you select requires technical assistance, get in touch with the soil conservation or forestry technician.



CARRY OUT THE PRACTICE

Complete the practice before the expiration date shown on the approval form.



REPORT PERFORMANCE

Report completion on or before the expiration date.

ASK YOUR ASCS COUNTY OFFICE FOR DETAILS

Your ASCS County Office will be glad to furnish you information about your county ACP, including eligible practices, rates of cost-sharing, and specifications for each practice. Take along any written farm conservation plan you have and visit the county office.

AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION PROGRAM



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